



# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release ON RECEIPT

Although three centuries of custom have made turkey for Thanksgiving an American institution, fish, to many people, still holds a prominent place on that holiday's bill of fare. Therefore, the fish cookery experts of the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior, are offering this suggestion:

"Why not serve a delicious whole baked fish, with or without stuffing?"

For the west coast and the nearer western sections, salmon or halibut are the best choices; for the mid-west, whitefish or lake trout; and for the north and south Atlantic areas, red drum, king mackerel, or striped bass. These fishes, which may weigh, "in the round", from 4 to 10 pounds each, when served with tasty garnishments make a delightful change-over for those who are surfeited with turkey or who want an alternate "family" dish for Thanksgiving day.

An excellent general method for baking whole fish, suitable for all these special names, is this:

Allow fish to stand for 5 minutes in a solution of 1/2 cup of salt and 1 quart of cold water. Dry fish and brush with cooking oil after slitting skin in several places. Lay 2 strips of bacon in greased baking pan. Stuff fish 3/4 full to allow for expansion, tie with string and place on strips of bacon. Lay 2 strips of bacon on fish. Bake 10 minutes in very hot oven (500 degrees F.) Lower temperature to 400 degrees and bake 10 minutes longer. Serve piping hot.

### Fish Stuffing

1/4 cup milk  
2 cups soft bread crumbs  
2 tbsps. butter or other fat  
1 onion, minced

1 stalk celery, cut fine  
1 egg, well beaten  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1/4 tsp. pepper  
1/2 tsp. sage

Pour milk over bread crumbs. Melt butter, add onion and brown. Pour into bread crumbs. Add celery, egg, and seasonings. Mix well. Fill fish, close opening, and bake. Makes about 2-1/4 cups stuffing.

(U. S. Regional Cook Book)

Thanksgiving is a period of heavy eating, anyhow. But fish and shellfish, which are easily digested, are particularly adapted for use on such an occasion. Utilized in canapes and hors d'oeuvres, they whet the appetite for the treat to come. The familiar oyster cocktail is traditional on many menus; the ever-popular shrimp cocktail is a necessary component for others; while clams for cocktails should be very chilly morsels, served with a sauce that is hot and spicy.

On that original Thanksgiving Day in 1621 when Governor Bradford, of the Plymouth Colony, appointed a day for public praise and prayer after the harvest, there is little doubt that oysters were included among the food items. While many experts prefer their oysters in the natural state as the first course of the Thanksgiving dinner, many others hold that the only proper stuffing for the Thanksgiving bird, be it turkey, duck, goose, or chicken, is oyster stuffing, since the delicate seafood flavor of the oyster combines superbly with the fowl as no other ingredient does.

Such a stuffing, easy to prepare, is extracted from The Story of Oysters (Fishery Circular No. 21):

### Oyster Stuffing for Turkey or Goose

1 pt. oysters  
1/4 cup butter  
1-1/2 cups cracker crumbs  
2 tsp. lemon juice

1 tbsp. chopped parsley  
Salt  
Pepper

Mix the crumbs, butter, parsley, lemon juice, and seasoning, and roll the oysters in the mixture so that each is well covered. Stuff all into the turkey or goose. If desired, the oysters may be chopped coarsely. For a large fowl, it will be necessary to increase this receipt, using the same proportions, in order to obtain sufficient stuffing.

A stuffing sufficient for a 14-pound turkey, which uses bread crumbs instead of cracker crumbs, is this one, taken from the U. S. Regional Cook Book:

### Oyster Stuffing

3 quarts soft bread crumbs  
4 tsps. salt  
1/2 tsp. pepper  
1 pint to 1 quart small  
oysters, whole or cut  
into small pieces

About 3/4 cup oyster  
liquor (use stock or milk  
if not sufficient liquor)  
1/2 cup butter or turkey fat,  
melted

Combine ingredients and mix well. (A 4-pound chicken would require about one-third this amount.)

### Oyster and Celery Stuffing

3/4 cup fat  
2 tbsps. chopped onion  
3 tbsps. chopped parsley

1-1/2 cups chopped celery  
6 cups soft bread crumbs  
1 pint oysters, chopped

Salt and pepper, to taste

Melt fat, add onion, parsley, and celery and cook until tender. Add bread crumbs and heat well. Add chopped oysters, seasoning, and mix lightly but thoroughly. Fills a 10-pound fowl. (U. S. Regional Cook Book)

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